

ALIEN ENCOUNTERS™



Catherine PENUMBRA

WRITE TO : ECLIPSE COMICS - P.O. BOX 199 - GUERNEVILLE - CALIFORNIA - 95446

ON THE RACKS

SCOUT no. 14

"Nobody Loves Me But My Mother"—concluding the saga of Doody, the Boy Prophet. Plus, the finale of the first "Monday the Eliminator" story.

ALIEN ENCOUNTERS no. 10

Four stories, including our first Ray Broadway adaptation, "The Exiles," by Tom Sutton.

AIRBOY no. 11 & 12

Still bi-weekly! Now full size! Learn the origin of Airboy's plane, Birdie, then join Skywolf, Davy and Hirota as they seek the destroyers of Skywolf's island sanctuary. Plus, Skywolf back-ups in each issue!

ZOOIVERSE no. 3

The sadistic Zoro sets up an entertaining kangaroo court, and the Kren Patrol falls toward the surface of Muns!

GIANT-SIZE MINI COMICS no. 3

More bizarreness from the minds of the mad geniuses who have made the mini-comics movement, one of the last cottage industries.

THE DREAMERY no. 1

Beginning a new serialized anthology comic! "André's Christmas Shoes," the story of a contented old who wants real horses like his father.

THE OFFICIAL HAWKMAN INDEX no. 2

All you need to know, complete with cover reproductions, about the adventures of the Feathered Furies from Tlanaagar.

NEW WAVE no. 11

Now Monthly! After their adventures on the island of Avalon and their battle with the Volunteers, the New Wave go to the circus!

LUGER no. 2

Luger and his sister(?) travel to a Pacific island in search of the missing girl. By one of the best teams in comics: Bruce Jones, Bo Hampton and Tom Yeates!

MR. MONSTER no. 7

Doc Stearn... Mr. Monster makes a career of saving other people from their horrors. But what's hiding under his own bed?

TALES OF THE BEANWORLD no. 5

Find out more about how the mystical pods work, and come meet a nifty new character!

THE OFFICIAL LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES INDEX no. 1

Starting our exhaustive survey of the granddaddy of modern super-hero group comics.

ADOLESCENT RADIOACTIVE

BLACK BELT HAMSTERS in 3-D no. 4

A special Hamster Christmas to you and yours in many 3-D. Join the Hamsters as they discover the true meaning of Christmas.

THE NEW DNAgens no. 15

An assault of bad news finds Sham melting away into nothingness, which leaves it up to the rest of the team to face the menace of Genstone II.

VILLAINS & VIGILANTES no. 1

Direct from the popular role-playing game! Two neophyte heroes look for jobs as members of the Crusaders. Instead, they find the Crusaders, who have other plans for them.

PORTIA PRINZ OF THE GLAMAZONS no. 1

Portia Prinz, the world's foremost pseudo-intellectual superheroin, returns in this special re-introductory issue. Don't miss this lead-in to the five-part story "Glamazon's Burden."

DEPORTEES: One of the weirdest things happened today. I just found out that I am a German citizen.

This is true. I'm not kidding.

I'm still an American citizen, thankfully, but I am also a German citizen. I have what they call "dual nationality."

It amazes me that in all my life the possibility of this never was mentioned, but yesterday, when my sister Letitia (who is studying classical music and wishes to obtain her master's degree in Germany) applied for an alien resident work permit, she was told she didn't need one because she is already a German citizen.

Boy, did this set off the alarms at home! You see, my mother was born in Germany, and fled the country (first to England, then to Italy, and finally to America) during the Nazi era. For the usual obvious reasons. In 1945, before I was born, she was naturalized as an American citizen. Both my sister and I were raised as Americans, and I, as the older, was told many, many things which led me to distrust the German people. (And why not?—hadn't they put my grandfather in Dachau?) (He was released through the intercession of highly-placed Aryan friends, thank god, before Hitler began the full-scale extermination of the Jews, and he and my grandmother settled in New York eventually... but my mother's cousin was not so lucky.)

Well, it seems that what with all of the fleeing for her life my mother did, she never renounced her German citizenship. It was unilaterally revoked by the German Nazi government. And with that government since discredited, all their actions became invalid. Thus, to Germany, my mother is simply a citizen who has stayed away without renewing her 1935 passport. She need only apply at the local German consulate and—presto!—she'll be up to date on her paperwork and all will be well with the world. Due to the circumstances under which she left, and the official German policy of atonement for past errors, they won't even make her file a late payment fee, I guess.

Meanwhile, my sister and I have inherited German citizenship from her "as a birthright," according to the U.S. State Department. And since Germany does not revoke one's citizenship if one swears allegiance to another nation (as my mother did when she became an American), even her long residence here and her U.S. citizenship do not conflict with her previous status, in the eyes of German law.

Now, the U.S., as is well known, demands an oath of allegiance from naturalized citizens, and will revoke even a native-born person's citizenship if said person swears allegiance to a foreign power—but Germany requires no oath of allegiance from its native born citizens—or from their children! Thus I am a German citizen AND an American one, through a quirk of the laws of both countries.

Okay. But the question that is weighing heavily on me today is—do I WANT to be a German citizen? I mean, technically I already AM, whether I care to be or not, but the German government doesn't know about it yet, because my birth was never registered with them. Shall I tell them? And if I do, then what?

Yes, it's the Nazi regime that's on my mind. Yes, I know that most Germans today are either innocent of those atrocities or regret them. (Or so they SAY...) Yes, I know that you can't blame an entire nation for the work carried out by the demonic few, and many years ago at that.

BUT...

Leaving the rest unsaid...

catherine yronwode

Ray Bradbury's The Exiles

WHEN SHALL WE THREE
MEET AGAIN...

...IN THUNDER,
LIGHTNING,
OR IN RAIN?

ROUND ABOUT THE CAULDRON GO!
IN THE POISOND ENTRAILS THROW!
DOUBLE, DOUBLE, TOIL AND TROUBLE!
FIRE BURN AND CAULDRON
BUBBLE!

WHERE'S THE
CRYSTAL?

WHERE THE NEEDLES?

HERE!

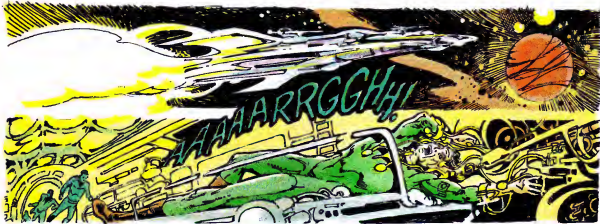
HAS THE YELLOW WAX
HARDENED?

IS THE WAX
FIGURE DONE?

GOOD!

GOOD!

NOW SHOVE THE NEEDLES THROUGH THE HEART!



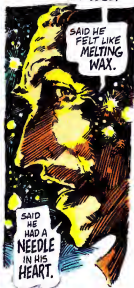
IN SORRY, CAPTAIN, PERCE'S DEAD.

LIKE THE OTHERS? NO APPARENT CAUSE?

NOT HIS HEART, HIS BRAIN, OR SHOCK?

THAT'S RIGHT.

PERSE COMPLAINED OF PAINS-- LIKE NEEDLES, HE SAID-- IN HIS WRISTS AND LEGS.



SAID HE FELT LIKE MELTING WAX.

SAID HE HAD A NEEDLE IN HIS HEART.

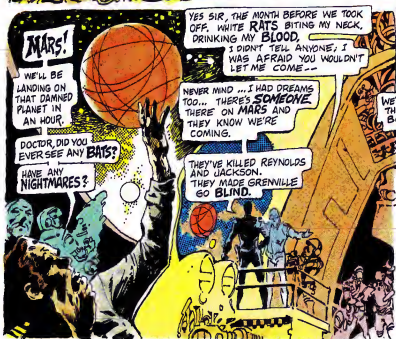


NIGHTMARES, JUST LIKE THE REST! REYNOLDS WAS HAUNTED BY DEMONS BEFORE HE DIED! AND WHAT DID JACKSON SEE OUTSIDE THE VIEWPORTS?

BATS, HE SAID.

BATS WITH WIEN'S FACES

HORRIBLE!



MARS!

WE'LL BE LANDING ON THAT DAMNED PLANET IN AN HOUR.

DOCTOR, DID YOU EVER SEE ANY BATS?

HAVE ANY NIGHTMARES?

YES SIR, THE MONTH BEFORE WE TOOK OFF. WHITE RATS BITING MY NECK, DRINKING MY BLOOD.

I DIDN'T TELL ANYONE; I WAS AFRAID YOU WOULDN'T LET ME COME--

NEVER MIND ... I HAD DREAMS TOO... THERE'S **SOMEONE** THERE ON MARS AND THEY KNOW WE'RE COMING.

THEY'VE KILLED REYNOLDS AND JACKSON. THEY MADE GRENNVILLE GO BLIND.



BATS, NEEDLES, DREAMS MEN DYING FOR NO REASON!

WITCHCRAFT!

BUT THIS IS 2120.

WE'RE RATIONAL MEN! THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING-- BUT IT IS HAPPENING!

SMITH!

FETCH THOSE BOOKS FROM MY CABIN!

I WANT THEM WHEN WE LAND.

THINK I'M INSANE, DOCTOR?
HAVE YOU LOOKED AT THEM?

JUST BEFORE WE TOOK OFF,
I ORDERED THESE BOOKS FROM
THE HISTORICAL MUSEUM,
BECAUSE OF MY DREAMS ...

... ALL MY DREAMS.

FOR WEEKS THE CREW
OF THIS SHIP HAS BEEN
STABBED, BUTCHERED,
IMPALED, BURIED ALIVE!

WE'VE DREAMT OF WITCH-
THINGS AND WERE THINGS,
VAMPIRES AND PHANTOMS---

THINGS WE COULDN'T POSSIBLY KNOW ABOUT!

I THOUGHT ALL THESE
GHASTLY BOOKS WERE
DESTROYED, BURNED
A CENTURY AGO.

THESE ARE THE VERY LAST
COPIES, KEPT FOR HISTORICAL
PURPOSES IN LOCKED
MUSEUM VAULTS.

TALES OF MYSTERY
AND IMAGINATION
BY EDGAR ALLAN
POE

BOOKS BY WALTER
DE LA MARE,
WAKEFIELD,
TOLKIEN,
LOVECRAFT,
WELLS,
HUXLEY--

BUT SIR, WHAT
GOOD ARE
THESE TO
US ON
THE
ROCKET?

I
DON'T
KNOW
...
YET.

IN AN HOUR
THEY'LL LAND
THEIR ROCKET!

AND THEY HAVE THE
LAST OF THE BOOKS
WITH THEM!
THAT FOOL OF A
CAPTAIN!

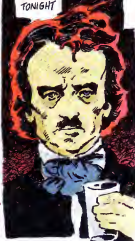
WE HAVEN'T
MUCH TIME!

WE'D BETTER
WARN
THEM
IN THE
CITY.

ALL FORBIDDEN AUTHORS,
ALL BURNED THE
SAME YEAR HALLOWEEN
WAS OUTLAWED AND
CHRISTMAS BANNED!



MECATE'S
FRIENDS
ARE
BUSY
TONIGHT



AH, THOSE **WITCHES!**

I SAW **WILL SHAKESPEARE**
AT THE SHORE
EARLIER,
WHIPPING THEM ON.



OBERON!

SHAKESPEARE'S ARMY ALONE
NUMBERS THOUSANDS ALL
ALONG THE SHORE OF THE
DRY SEA--
-- THE WITCHES...
HAMLET'S FATHER, PUCK, ALL OF THEM,
GOOD LORD! A SEA OF PEOPLE!

DICKENS...

WE'LL HAVE TO TELL **MR. DICKENS** NOW,
WE'VE PUT IT OFF TOO LONG, WILL YOU
GO TO HIS HOUSE WITH ME, **BIERCE?**



I WAS THINKING, **POE**

WHA--

WHAT'LL
HAPPEN
TO
US?

IF WE CAN'T **KILL THE**
ROCKET MEN, FRIGHTEN
THEM AWAY...

THEN WE'LL HAVE
TO **LEAVE**, OF
COURSE,



WE'LL GO TO
JUPITER,

IF THEY FOLLOW
US THERE, WE'LL
GO ON TO
SATURN...

WE'LL GO TO **URANUS**

OR **NEPTUNE** AND THEN
OUT TO **PLUTO...**

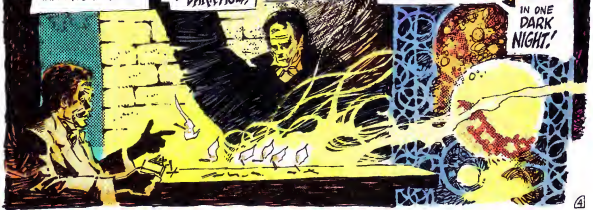
WE CAN HOPE FOR ONE OF
THEIR **ATOMIC WARS--**

THE RETURN OF
THE **DARK AGES**,

SUPERSTITION!

PERHAPS THEN WE COULD COME BACK TO
EARTH, ALL OF US ...

IN ONE
DARK
NIGHT!



WHY MUST THEY COME **HERE?**

MUST THEY RUIN THIS WORLD TOO?

WON'T THEY LEAVE
ANYTHING UNDEFILED?



I FIND OUR SITUATION
AMUSING, POE, IT
SHOULD BE QUITE
A WAR!

I SHALL SIT
ON THE SIDELINES
AND BE THE
SCORE KEEPER

SO MANY EARTHMEN BOILED
IN OIL, SO MANY **MSS**
FOUND IN BOTTLES' BURNT

HA!



SO MANY EARTHMEN
STABBED WITH
NEEDLES-

SO MANY **'RED DEATHS'** CHASED
AWAY BY HYPODERMIC SYRINGES

HA!

BE WITH US, **BIERCE**, IN THE NAME OF **GOD!**

DID WE HAVE A FAIR TRIAL BEFORE
A COMPANY OF LITERARY CRITICS?

NO!

OUR BOOKS WERE PLUCKED UP BY
NEAT, STERILE, SURGEONS' PLIERS!
FLUNG INTO VATS TO BOIL,...

TO BE
KILLED
OF ALL THEIR
MORTUARY
GERMS...



MR.
POE!

MR.
BIERCE!

YES
YES!
WE'RE
COMING!



HAVEN'T YOU **HEARD?**

THE ROCKETS LANDING IN AN HOUR!

THEY'RE BRINGING **BOOKS**
WITH THEM: **OLD BOOKS**,
THE WITCHES SAID!

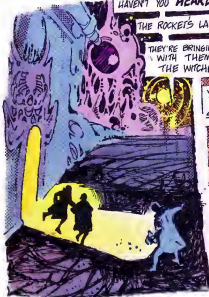
YOU HAVE TO
DO
SOMETHING!

WE'RE DOING EVERYTHING WE CAN,
BLACKWOOD. YOU'RE NEW TO ALL THIS.

COME ALONG, WE'RE GOING TO MR.
CHARLES DICKENS' PLACE---

TO CONTEMPLATE
OUR **DOOM**,
MR. **BLACKWOOD**.

OUR
**BLACK
DOOM!**



ALL ALONG THE DEAD SEA TONIGHT I'VE CALLED THE OTHERS.
THE TRAPS ARE WAITING; THE PITs, YES, AND THE PENDULUM,
EVEN THE RED DEATH!

THEY'VE ASKED FOR IT
AND THEY SHALL HAVE IT!

IS IT FAR TO MR. DICKENS' PLACE, BIERCE?

NOT FAR, BLACKWOOD
JUST OVER THE MOOR.

GOD REST YOU MERRY GENTLEMEN,
LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY,
REMEMBER CHRIST YOUR SAVIOUR
WAS BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY!

TO SAVE POOR SOULS FROM SATAN'S POWER,
WHICH'D LLOONGGG TIME GONE ASTRAAAAY,
AND IT'S TIPINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY!
COMM. FOORT AND JOY!
AND IT'S TIPINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY!

AH, HERE
KUB ARE!

IT COMES UPON
YOU SUDDENLY
THIS...
PLACE!

WHAT DO
YOU WANT?

WE'VE COME TO PLEAD
WITH YOU AGAIN,
CHARLES.

SCROOGE MARLEY
AND DICKENS

WE-WE NEED
YOUR HELP.

SEE POE, HOW THE WINE IS
FOURCED AND THE BROWN
TURKEYS DO THEIR EXCELLENT
BEST TO STEAM.
AND WHO IS THIS?

LOOKING AS IF HE MIGHT
BE AN UNDIGESTED BIT
OF BEEF, - A BLOT OF
MUSTARD...

... A FRAGMENT OF
UNDERDONE POTATO?

WHO ELSE BUT
MR. JACOB
MARLEY, CHAINS
AND ALL!

BIERCE, PLEASE! OUR
BUSINESS HERE IS URGENT!

COME IN, THEN, MR. POE,
COME IN BY THE FIRE
AND STATE YOUR REQUEST,
BUT YOU'LL FIND NO HELP
IN ME, I ASSURE YOU -

URGENT,
INDEED!

YOU WANT ME TO HELP YOU
FIGHT THOSE GOOD MEN
COMING IN THE ROCKET.
DON'T YOU?

OH YES, I KNEW THEY
WERE COMING!

OH, YES, I KNEW
THEY WERE COMING
BUT I CAN'T
HELP YOU, POE!

I WON'T!

I DON'T BELONG HERE
ANYWAY, MY BOOKS
WERE BURNED BY MISTAKE.

I'M NO SUPERNATURALIST,
NO WRITER OF HORRORS
AND TERRORS LIKE YOU!

I'LL HAVE NOTHING
TO DO WITH YOU,
ANY OF YOU!

YOU'RE A PERSUASIVE TALKER. YOU COULD MEET WITH THE ROCKETMEN, CHARLES. TALK TO THEM. LULL THEIR SUSPICIONS AND WE WOULD DO THE REST.

GOOD LORD! YOU ARE GRIM MAN, MR. POE!

THIS BLACK CAT IS FOR THEIR CAPTAIN, AND FOR THE REST--

THE PREMATURE BURIAL!

IT IS YOU WHO MUST REMEMBER, CHARLES!

REMEMBER THE YEAR 1020, WHEN THEY OUTLAWED OUR BOOKS, SUMMONED US OUT OF... WHAT?



NO! I WAS NO PLAYER WITH MIDNIGHT THINGS.

WHAT OF CHRISTMAS CAROL?

THEY DESTROYED YOUR BOOKS, YOUR WORLDS TOO!



ONE STORY! A FEW GHOSTS AND SPIRITS! MOST OF MY WORKS HAD NONE OF THAT!

THEY ARE STUPID AND RUDE, BUT THAT IS ALL!

NOW - YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS HAD BEST GO PLEASE!

I AM A FRIGHTENED AND ANGRY MAN!

I AM A GOD, MR. DICKENS, EVEN AS YOU AND BIERCE AND BLACKWOOD ARE GODS.

OUR CREATIONS HAVE BEEN BANISHED AND BURNED, RUINED AND DONE AWAY WITH!

OUR INVENTED WORLDS ARE FALLING TO ASHES, MR. DICKENS!

EVEN GODS MUST FIGHT!

DEATH? THE BEYOND? I DON'T KNOW, BUT OUR CREATIONS CALLED US, AND WE CAME HERE TO MARS AND KEPT THEM ALIVE THESE HUNDRED YEARS.

WE WAITED UNTIL NOW, NOW THEY COME HERE TO CLEAN US OUT, TO DESTROY OUR DARK THINGS, TO MURDER ALL THE ALCHEMISTS, WITCHES, VAMPIRES AND WERE-THINGS WHO RETREATED ACROSS SPACE FROM THEIR WHITE FROCKED STERILITY!

CHARLES! YOU MUST HELP US. WE NEED YOU!



YOUR MANNERS, MR. POE! YOU'RE FRIGHTENING MY GUESTS. PLEASE CALM YOURSELF--

REMEMBER, YOU'RE IN MY HOME, AND THIS IS CHRISTMAS!

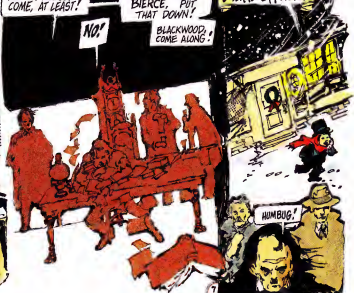
LET MR. MARLEY COME, AT LEAST!

VERY WELL, THEN-- BIERCE, PUT THAT DOWN!

NO!

BLACKWOOD, COME ALONG.

MERRY CHRISTMAS.



HUMB! HUMB!

MR POE!
SEE THE
BUBBLING
CAULDRONS!

THE
POISONS!

THE CHALKED
PENTAGRAMS!

GOOD!
FINE!

WE'LL BE
READY
FOR
THEM!

SEE! SEE!
A FALLING
STAR!

NO, IT'S A ROCKET!
IT WON'T BE LONG NOW!

SHIP, SHIP, BREAK, FALL!
SHIP, SHIP, BURN ALL!

CRACK, FLAKE, SHAKE, MELT!
MUMMY DUST, CAT PELT!

POE! POE!
MR. POE, I'M
SO GLAD
YOU'RE HERE!

MR. MACHEN!
AND
MR. COPPARD
TOD!

I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE BOTH WITH US NOW.
IN THIS HOUR, THE ROCKET'S ALMOST HERE!
THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME! I HAVE TO GATHER
EVERYONE--

DON'T
SPEAK
OF IT!

WE MUST! NOW,
AS THE ROCKET
DESCENDS YOU
MR. POE, YOU
COPPARD, BIERCE,
ALL GROW FAINT
LIKE WOOD
SMOKE,
BLOWING
AWAY
YOUR
FACES MELT--

EVERYONE'S HERE, POE, WE'RE READY,
BUT LISTEN! I'VE HAD A TERRIBLE
THOUGHT-- WHAT HAPPENS TO US
WHEN THE LAST COPIES OF OUR
BOOKS ARE DESTROYED?

DEATH! REAL DEATH FOR ALL OF US!

OH, LAST NIGHT I FELT I'LL, I'LL, I'LL,
TO THE HARRONS OF MY SOUL! I FELT
MYSELF A CANDLE GUTTERING IN THE
WIND-- SUDDENLY I SPRANG UP, GIVEN
NEW LIGHT-- A SHORT PREVIEW AS SOME
CHILD, SNEEZING ATTIC-DUST, FOUND
A WORN, TIME-SPECKED COPY OF ME!

THERE'S THE
ONE I RIT

LOOK AT HIM! ONCE MORE REAL
THAN WE, WHO WERE MEN!

THEY TOOK HIM, A
SKELETON-THOUGHT,
CLOTHED HIM IN
CENTURIES OF PINK
FLESH AND SNOW
BEARD, RED VELVET
SUIT AND BLACK BOOTS!

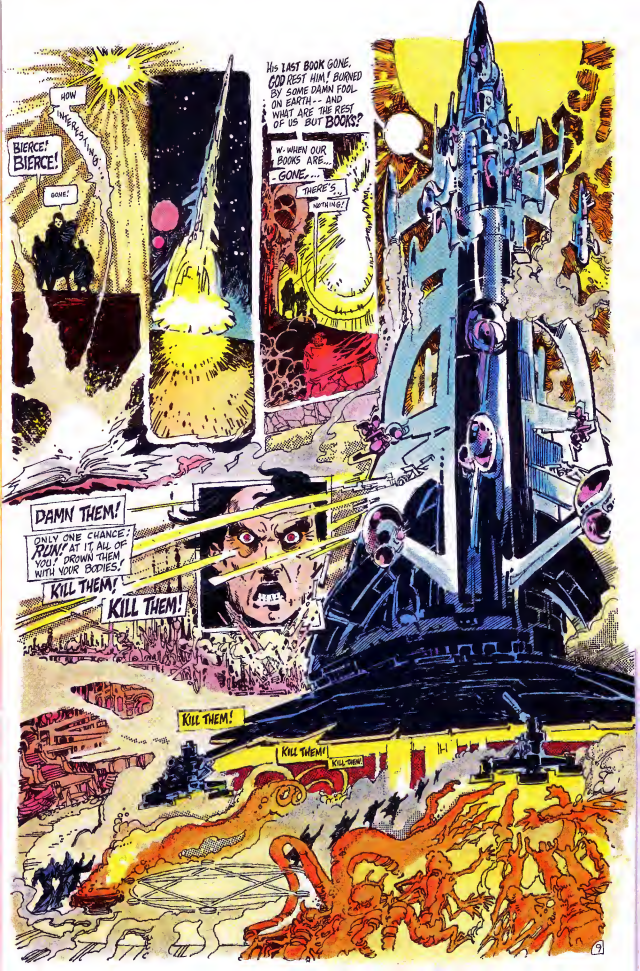
MADE HIM REINDEER
TINSEL, HOLLY
MANUFACTURED
HIM, DROWNED
HIM IN A VAT
OF LYSOL...
AND FORGOT HIM!

WHAT MUST IT BE ON
EARTH WITHOUT
CHRISTMAS?
NO JOY--
ONLY SNOW,
WIND AND THE
LONELY
FACTUAL PEOPLE...

A REGRETTABLE SITUATION
FOR THE YULETIDE
MERCHANTS WHO-- OUCH!

IT-- IT
SEEMS
MY
TIME
HAS
COME--
GENTLEMEN...





HOW
INTERESTING!
BIERCE!
BIERCE!
GONE!

HIS LAST BOOK GONE.
GOD REST HIM! BURNED
BY SOME DAMN FOOL
ON EARTH-- AND
WHAT ARE THE REST
OF US BUT BOOKS?

W-WHEN OUR
BOOKS ARE...
-GONE...
THERE'S...
NOTHING!

DAMN THEM!

ONLY ONE CHANCE:
RUN! AT IT ALL OF
YOU! DROWN THEM
WITH YOUR BODIES!

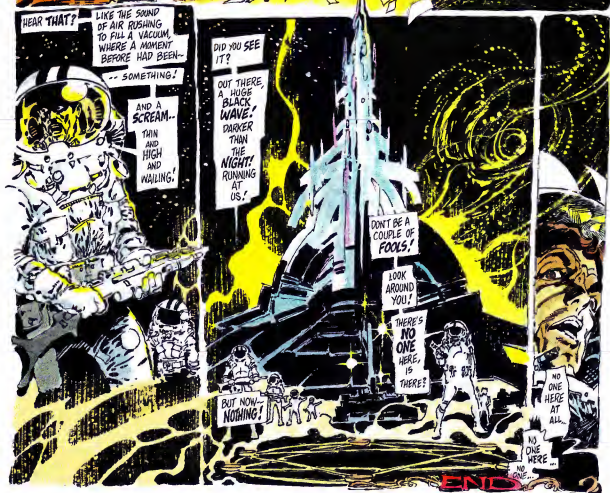
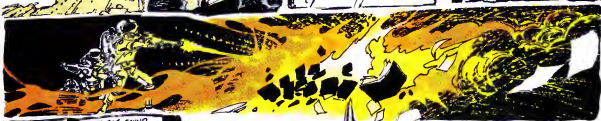
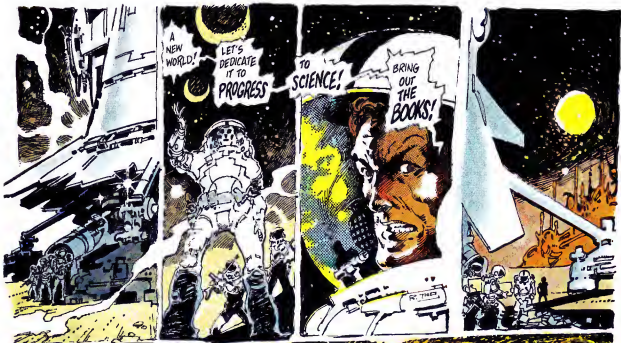
KILL THEM!

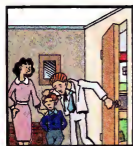
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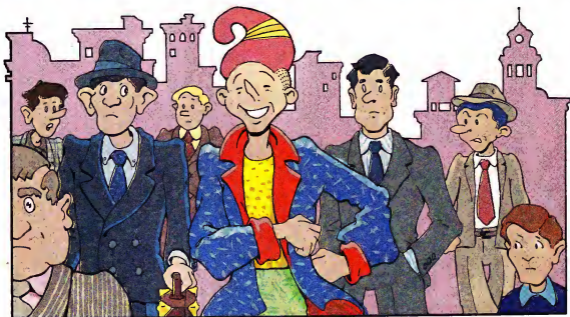
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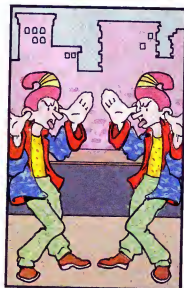
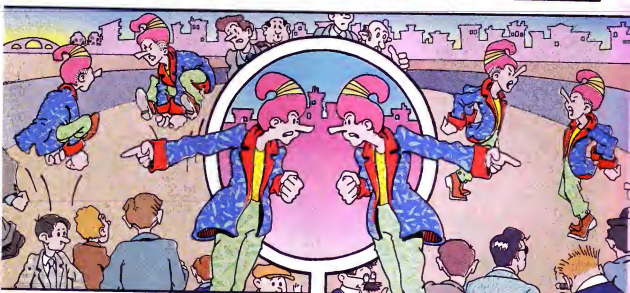
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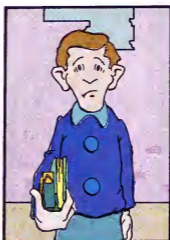
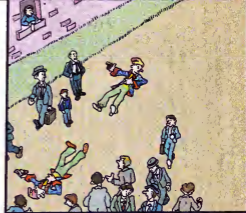




CRACKED MIRRORS







TAKE THE FIRST EXIT OFF JEFFERSON DRIVE
PAST THE OLD HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING.

GO PAST THE SUNOCO,
AND KEEP ON ALL
THE WAY THROUGH
OAKLAWN HILLS.

AT THE END, GO
LEFT, LEFT, RIGHT,
THEN STOP AT THE
BLUE DUPLEX
WITH THE BROKEN
LATCH AND THE
CONCRETE BIRD-
BATH IN FRONT...

AND THERE YOU WILL FIND THE
LIVING APOTHEOSIS OF
ETHEREAL BEAUTY MADE
FLESH AND TRANSCENDENT
SENSUALITY
INCARNATE.

CASSANDRA
MANCHESTER,
THE MOST
PERFECT GIRL
IN THE WORLD.

HEY, GRANT!
HEY, GRANT!
WAKE UP
STUPID!

EARTH TO
GRANT!
MAN, YOU
LOST IT!

DUDE, SHE'S
JUST LIKE
YOU KNOW,
A GIRL.

YOU'RE SUCH A
MORON, EDDIE.

SHE'S COMPLETELY
...OFF THE SCALE.
SHE'S... PERFECT.

YEAH, WELL, SHE
LOOKS KIND OF
LIKE A MODEL OR
ACTRESS OR
SOMETHING, BUT
MAYBE SHE'S FRIGID.

YOU'RE SUCH
AN EXPERT,
YOU LOSER.

LOOK!
SEE!
HER MOM'S
CHECK HAS
HER PHONE
NUMBER
ON IT!

I'M GOING TO
ASK HER OUT!

STILL, I MUST
WIN HER!

SHE IS MY GOAL IN
FEMININE BEAUTY!

DON'T BE
SUCH A DOG-
BRAIN, GRANT.
SHE'S A SENIOR
AND SHE'S
ENGAGED AND
YOU'VE NEVER
EVEN HAD A
DATE!

TO POSSESS
HER I WILL
RISK ALL--
SACRIFICE ALL!

I CAN'T
TAKE THIS!
SHE'S JUST A
HIGH SCHOOL
GIRL! SHE'S
JUST NORMAL!

SHE'S NOT
MAGIC OR
ANYTHING!

YOU'RE
NUTS.

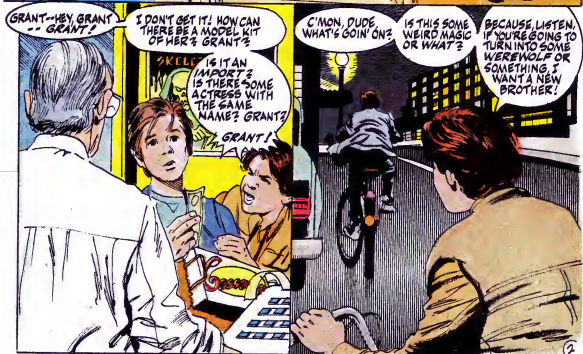
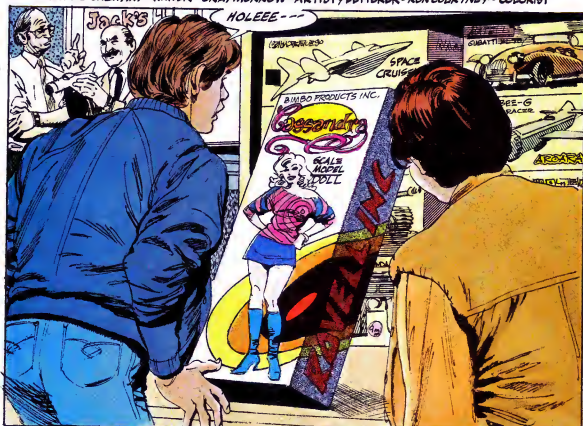
TOY
MOP

GRANT

EDDIE

PERFECT MODEL

BEPPE SABATINI~WRITER • GRAY MORROW~ARTIST & LETTERER • RON COURTNEY~COLORIST



SHE MUST BE PERFECT

ONCE I SAW
CASSANDRA
IN A SWIMSUIT

AND SHE HAD
NO SCARS
NO SEAMS

AND THE SUN

TURNED HER
SKIN CAMEL
TURNED
HER HAIR
LEMON CREME

(SHE
MUST BE
PERFECT)

PEACH GLOSSED LIPS

LONG
SMOOTH
LIMBS
LONG
JADE NAILS
MATCHED
HER
EARRINGS
MATCHED
HER EYES

(SHE
MUST BE
PERFECT)

FINISH HER

AND IF
SHE IS
FLAWLESS
IMMACULATE
PRISTINE
WITHOUT
BLEMISH
WITHOUT
FINGERPRINTS
WITHOUT
BRUISES
YOU WILL BE

REWARDED.

AND THAT WAS THE
LAST NIGHT GRANT
EVER SPENT

UNSULLIED.

WHEN GRANT IS 80, WHEN LIVER SPOTS CRAWL ACROSS HIS SCALP LIKE LICHEN, HE WILL HEAR AN OLD SONG OR CATCH AN OLD FAINT SCENT AND THESE NIGHTS WILL ALL COME BACK TO HIM.

HE WOULD MAKE THIS RUSH HOME FROM SCHOOL-- THIS FEVERISH, BREATHLESS RUSH-- AND CASSANDRA WOULD BE WAITING FOR HIM.

OR SOMETHING VERY MUCH LIKE CASSANDRA.

SHE HAD THIS GYMNAST'S BODY, ALL MUSCLE TONE AND AROUSAL.

SHE WAS ALWAYS WRAPPED UP IN NEW LINGERIE, LIKE A CHRISTMAS PRESENT, AND SHE ALWAYS SMELLED FAINTLY OF STRAWBERRY SHAMPOO AND NEW FABRIC.

SHE WOULD DRAW THEIR BODIES TOGETHER, AND LIE DOWN, AND HOLD HIM AGAINST HER.

AND THEY WOULD LIE LIKE THAT, THEIR BODIES WARMING AND MOULDING TO EACH OTHER, MAYBE AN HOUR, UNTIL CASSIE WOULD SNAKE HER LITTLE PINK TONGUE INTO HIS LIPS, OR PROBE HER LITTLE HAND INTO HIS TROUSERS.

AND WHEN THEY WERE BOTH READY

THE WEEK OF ACHING EXERTION AND BLINDING EXCITEMENT AND HALLUCINATING GLEEPLESSNESS...

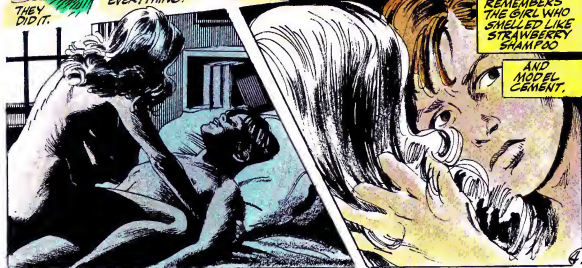
AND IT WILL ALL COME BACK TO HIM:

SHE KNEW EVERYTHING.

THEY DID IT.

WHEN HE REMEMBERS THE GIRL WHO SMELLED LIKE STRAWBERRY SHAMPOO

AND MODEL CEMENT.



SO I ASK IF SHE'S ON THE PILL, AND SHE JUST LAUGHS, YOU KNOW?

SHE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT ANYTHING REALLY, AND LAST NIGHT, DAD ALMOST CAUGHT US--

JUST, "YOU'RE SAFE, HA-HA."

SO WHO CARES? JUST USE HER.

SHE'S NOT "JUST A TOY" EDDIE! I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE IS! I THINK SHE TOOK ONE OF MY MODELS, TOO. YOU KNOW, THE CORD ROADSTER?

OH, NO! YOUR BEST MODEL!

BUMMER! WHAT WOULD SHE DO WITH IT?

REALLY! IT TOOK ME FOUR MONTHS TO BUILD IT. IT WAS GONE THIS MORNING!

YA WANNA DRIVE? I DON'T KNOW HOW!

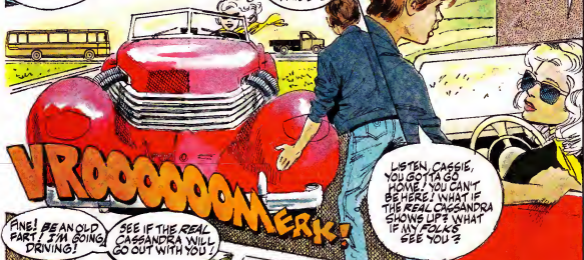
I RAN OVER A DOG, I THINK!

WHAT, IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE FUNNY?

I DUNNO... I MEAN SHE'S JUST A TOY, Y'KNOW?

MY MODEL!

HI, HONEY! WANT TO GO FOR A RIDE?



FINE! BE AN OLD FART! I'M GOING DRIVING!

SEE IF THE REAL CASSANDRA WILL GO OUT WITH YOU!

LISTEN, CASSIE, YOU GOTTA GO HOME! YOU CAN'T BE HERE! WHAT IF THE REAL CASSANDRA SHOWS UP? WHAT IF MY FOLKS SEE YOU?



PUT MY MODEL BACK! MAKE IT LITTLE AGAIN!

DON'T SCRATCH IT!

SKREEEEEEEE CRUNCH!

SEEZ, CASSIE, COULD YOU STOP TAKING MY MODELS OUT?

YOU TRASH THEM COMPLETELY. THAT AIRPLANE COST ME SIXTY BUCKS!

WELL, SOMETIMES, I WONDER... I MEAN... MAYBE... WELL, IF I'M AWAY AT SCHOOL, DO YOU EVER, YOU KNOW, LIKE, THINK ABOUT ME?

LOOK, WE GOTTA TALK, CASSIE.

I MEAN, YOU NEVER USE MY NAME, YOU KNOW? YOU NEVER EVEN CALL ME GRANT OR ANYTHING.

I GUESS SO, I DON'T KNOW, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

I KNOW YOUR NAME, IT'S GRANT, OKAY?

WHY STALL AROUND... GRANT? JUST TELL ME WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU... GRANT? C'MON, GRANT! CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE, GRANT?

OH, WHINE, WHINE, WHINE.

I'M SO HORNY AND ALL YOU DO IS COMPLAIN.

I'M TRYING TO EXPLAIN-- IT'S LIKE WHEN I TOLD YOU HOW MY DAD WAS ON MY CASE? FOR HAVING YOU OVER? WELL--

L-A-T-E-D-AH...

HOW-DY-E-DO...

HUMPA-HUMPA-HUMPA!

MY FATHER? YOU DID IT WITH MY FATHER? YOU BITCH! HOW COULD YOU DO THAT TO ME?

-- I TOOK CARE OF IT. I SHUT HIM UP DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

YEAH... BUT HOW?

GRANT...

HONEY...

I'M NOT A PERSON...

WHAT KIND OF PERSON ARE YOU?

CASSIE, SLOW DOWN!--LISTEN, I HAVE TO TAKE MY
PEAT'S THIS WEEKEND--
--SO I THOUGHT MAYBE
YOU COULD PLEASE, UH,
GET SMALL, FOR A WHILE.

NO, I
LIKE
BEING
BIG.

WELL, I
MEAN, I'M
ONLY FOURTEEN
--I SHOULDN'T
SEE JUST ONE
PERSON.

OH, RIGHT,
YOU'RE
LIVING
WITH ME,
AND YOU
WANT TO
SEE
OTHER
GIRLS?

WE'RE NOT LIVING
TOGETHER, WE JUST
--LIVE TOGETHER.

FINE, YOU TAKE OUT
ANGELA MANISCALCO,
AND I'LL TAKE
OUT ENOLA GAY.

MY ENOLA
GAY? MY
HIROSHIMA
BOMBER?

YOU'D NUKE
MY DATE?

WHY NOT?
A MINE IS A
TERRIBLE
THING TO
WASTE.

I DO.
IT DOESN'T
CONCERN YOU.
BUT
IF YOU DO IT,
I'LL NUKE YOU.

YOU'RE
GETTING TO BE AN
AWFULLY SNIPPY
LITTLE BOY, AREN'T
YOU?
I DON'T
LIKE YAPPY LITTLE
BOYS, YOU NEED
SOME FIXING UP.

WELL, MAYBE YOU
SHOULD DATE
OTHER PEOPLE.

LOOK, YOU
DON'T OWN
ME,
YOU KNOW!

AS A MATTER
OF FACT I
OWN YOU!
I PAID
FOR YOU!

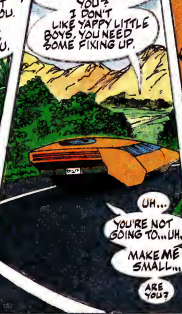
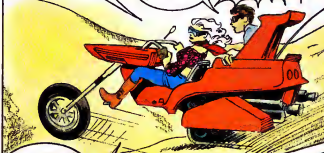
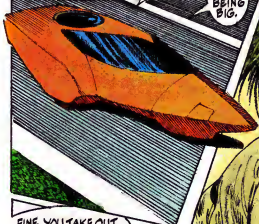
UH...
YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO...UH...
MAKE ME
SMALL...
ARE
YOU?

OH, JUST QUIT
COMPLAINING,
WILL YOU?

I'M GOING
TO BED.

OKAY, BUT
FIRST I
HAVE TO
FINISH THIS
BIPLANE...

I DON'T
CARE.



IF A STRANGER WANTED TO ENTER
YOUR HOUSE-- WHAT DOOR WOULD
IT USE?

IF SOMETHING
UNWHOLESOME
WANTED TO TEMPT
YOU-- WOULD IT
COME AS A LOVER?

SO, EDDIE, TAKE
CARE-- I WON'T
WRITE, BUT I'LL
BE OKAY!

WE'RE TAKING BOATS
AND PLANES-- MAYBE
WE'LL STOP AND GET
A MOON ROCKET!
I'VE
DECIDED TO
NEVER LET
CASSIE GET
BORED AGAIN!

BUT... BUT...

JUST IN TIME, TOO!

VROOOO

ARE
THEY
GONE?

GRANT! BUT
I JUST
SAW YOU...

HAN! YOU
THOUGHT!

THAT WAS
THE LITTLE
PILOT FROM
MY BIPLANE!
I SPENT ALL
NIGHT
CUSTOMIZING
HIM-- THEN I
HID HIM IN MY
LAST CAR!

SO NOW POLYTHENE
PAM IS OFF WITH
SOME FAKE YOU
RUNNING BERSERK
TOODLE-OO FOREVER?

DEFINITELY!
I BLEW
HER OFF!

DUDE
YOU'RE A
GENIUS!

HOW
TRUE! BUT
NOW COMES
THE
SCARIEST
PART OF
ALL!

IS THIS CASSANDRA
MANCHESTER? HI,
HOW YOU DOIN'?

YEAH, IT'S
GRANT FROM
NATSCI!
SO, I HEARD
YOU AND YOUR
BOYFRIEND
BROKE UP!
YEAH, ME
TOO!
BUMMER,
HUH?

OH, YOU WOULD
HAVE LIKED HER!
YEAH, SHE KIND OF
LOOKED LIKE YOU!

END

ARENA



The planet "Arena" is a vast desert area over all its surface. Only certain beings specially adapted for this kind of climate can survive in this world. My presence here is due to those beings— or rather I should say "animals"—although I don't like that word because of its pejorative tone.



It seems anachronous to think that water, so scarce on "Arena," was practically my normal element on earth and that it was I myself, moved by the circumstances, who provoked such a change in my environment.





My name is Helen Slowsky, and I am a biologist. Four years ago I obtained permission from the M.R.A. to carry out experiments with dolphins at Marineland. My purpose was to succeed in establishing a system of communication between dolphins and myself; I selected Finny, a male dolphin who possessed qualities favorable for carrying on the experiments. I demonstrated that the level of intelligence of the dolphin was greater than was supposed and that it was capable of reasoning and of speaking on the level of a six-year-old child.



My discovery allowed me to reach a deep level of understanding of Finny and, through him, of his species. I was surprised by his extreme sensitivity, his deep capacity for emotion . . . this precisely was the cause of what happened later, when Finny finally declared openly his love and his desire to be my mate. That surprising circumstance produced a real problem for me, and I decided to leave and hand over the work to Dr. Henderson, who suggested that we should put a female dolphin in the tank with him, hoping in that way to solve the problem.



But the results were null. Finny ignored his new companion and repeatedly asked for me. We agreed that the best thing to do was to let some time go by, hoping that Finny would finally forget about me. I asked for my transfer to "Arena" to continue my studies of animal communication, working this time with a certain species of mammal known as Hip-Fib, of unusual intelligence. However, I kept in almost daily contact with Henderson to follow Finny's progress back home.





The results were invariably negative. He kept on asking for me with anxious urgency. One day Henderson called me; the tone of his voice allowed the gravity of the news to peep through before he spoke: Finny had committed suicide. Henderson, wishing to bring about a hasty resolution to the situation, had had the stupidity to tell him that I had died in an accident. Finny jumped out of the tank that night . . . by morning he was lifeless. The news affected me deeply. I had grown fond of Finny and I couldn't avoid a feeling of guilt; perhaps my own conduct had been wrong. I should have reasoned with Finny and made him see the impossibility of our love. I learned my lesson . . . and now I have the opportunity to put it into practice. The male Hip-Fib, subject of my experiments, transmitted to me yesterday his first words, "I love you."

